

**Testimony Concerning SB 253**  
**John and Sue Bradley**  
**Foster family for multiple registered Animal Importers**

We would like to thank the Environmental Committee for the opportunity to express our concerns on SB253, An Act Concerning Revisions to the Animal Importation Statutes

We are registered voters in Middlefield, and we are Volunteers and a foster family for several registered non-profit rescue groups.

We have been fostering dogs since 2005 for many reputable rescue groups. We have seldom had a dog either come to us with an illness, or fall ill within our care.

While we are in favor of a health checkup upon entering the state, after following the new importation legislation concerning health checkups, we feel that revisions should be considered. The current requirements have resulted in many extra unnecessary health checks.

The section requiring *"Each animal must be examined by a state-licensed veterinarian within 15 days before a sale, adoption, or transfer and the veterinarian must provide the animal importer a written health certificate for the animal."* has been of particular burden.

Foster dogs, on average, are with us for about three to four weeks. We understand the State's position requiring an adoptable dog to be examined upon entry into the state. The rescue groups that we volunteer for require in their adoption agreement that the adopter schedule a health check with their trusted Veterinarian during the initial two weeks of the dog being with them to get established with them and to continue the heartworm prevention.

The dogs we foster travel to us under the care of professional pet transporters. They require that the dogs are checked by a Veterinarian and are issued a health certificate which travels with them to us. So, with this 15 day requirement, the average foster dog gets a health exam within a couple days before travel, gets a second health check upon arrival, stays with us for a few weeks where if he does not get adopted within 15 days, goes to the vet again before the adopters get him, and goes once again with the adopters. In many cases this results in a dog going to the vet four times in less than six weeks, three being at the expense of the rescue group. On the off chance that the adoption is not a good match for the family and the dog comes back to us, the dog then would have to go for a health certificate again before going to another family.

We had one of our foster dogs that had to go for another health check because we could not finalize the adoption during the aftermath of storm Alfred. The adopters did not have power for over a week, and quite frankly, had more pressing issues to deal with. He had to stay an additional week with us, causing him to go beyond the 15 days since his initial health check. So we brought a known healthy dog to the vet to rack up another \$40+ in expenses due to a snowstorm.

In our opinion, the added health check within 15 days with our vet before transfer to the adopter serves no valid purpose. The original health check upon entry should be valid for the 90 days without the 15 day stipulation. The adopters are required through the adoption agreement to take the dog to their vet with whom they have an established history. That veterinarian's exam will carry far more weight with an adopter. The added expense for issuance of a second health certificate could be better used to help other dogs in need.

I strongly encourage you to support this bill and consider all options to ease any unnecessary financial burden on the legitimate rescue groups that are truly acting in the best interest of the rescued dogs and cats.

Thank you,

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